

Introduced by Senator Simitian

August 7, 2006

Senate Joint Resolution No. 33—Relative to elder abuse awareness.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 33, as introduced, Simitian. Elder abuse awareness stamp.

This measure would request the President and the Congress of the United States to enact legislation that would authorize the United States Postmaster General to establish a special rate of postage for first-class mail, and to issue a special postage stamp, to provide funds for elder abuse prevention and awareness programs.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, According to the 2000 decennial census, 12
2 percent of the total population in the United States was 65 years
3 of age or older, representing 35 million individuals. By the year
4 2030, it is estimated that the number and percentage of
5 individuals who are 65 years of age or older will nearly double to
6 20 percent of the total population, or 60 million individuals; and
7 WHEREAS, It is estimated that 4 to 6 percent of all senior
8 citizens will become victims of some form of elder abuse,
9 including neglect and exploitation; and
10 WHEREAS, The act of elder abuse, including neglect and
11 exploitation, is considered the “crime of the 21st century”; and
12 WHEREAS, Fewer than 20 percent of elder abuse cases are
13 reported to adult protective services or law enforcement
14 agencies; and
15 WHEREAS, According to the American Medical Association,
16 seniors who are abused or mistreated are three times more likely

1 to die earlier than seniors of the same age who are not abused or
2 mistreated; and

3 WHEREAS, Although the federal government spends \$520
4 million on programs designed to combat violence against
5 women, and \$6.7 billion on child abuse prevention efforts, it
6 spends only \$153.5 million on elder abuse prevention; and

7 WHEREAS, To combat elder abuse, our government has the
8 responsibility to help raise awareness in the community and fund
9 programs that protect elders, train law enforcement, and support
10 local and state prosecutors; and

11 WHEREAS, Former United States Senator John Breaux (D -
12 Louisiana) introduced Senate Bill No. 333, known as The Elder
13 Justice Act, which sought to provide national leadership to
14 combat elder abuse, including neglect and exploitation; and

15 WHEREAS, One means of funding this legislation is to
16 authorize and issue a special postage stamp, the revenue from
17 which would help fund the programs outlined in this bill. A
18 special postage stamp for elder abuse awareness, like the breast
19 cancer stamp, would cost postal patrons more than the face value
20 of the stamp. Funds collected in excess of the face value of the
21 stamp, after the postal service is reimbursed for its costs related
22 to issuing this special postage stamp, would provide funding for
23 elder abuse programs; and

24 WHEREAS, An elder abuse awareness stamp would also
25 provide a method for all citizens to learn about, and contribute to
26 stopping, this shocking crime; now, therefore, be it

27 *Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of*
28 *California, jointly,* That the Legislature hereby respectfully
29 memorializes the President and Congress of the United States to
30 afford the public a convenient way to contribute towards the
31 funding of elder abuse prevention and awareness programs by
32 authorizing the United States Postmaster General to establish a
33 special rate of postage for first-class mail, and to issue a special
34 postage stamp regarding elder abuse prevention and awareness;
35 and be it further

36 *Resolved,* That the Legislature respectfully memorializes the
37 Congress and the President to enact appropriate legislation that
38 would address the concerns set forth in this measure; and be it
39 further

1 *Resolved*, That a copy of this measure be transmitted to the
2 President and Vice President of the United States, the Speaker of
3 the House of Representatives, the Chairpersons of the House and
4 Senate Committees on Aging, and to each Senator and
5 Representative from California in the Congress of the United
6 States; and be it further

7 *Resolved*, That the Legislature respectfully memorializes other
8 state legislatures to pass similar resolutions that memorialize the
9 President and Congress of the United States to authorize the
10 United States Postmaster General to establish a special rate of
11 postage and issue a special postage stamp regarding elder abuse
12 prevention and awareness; and be it further

13 *Resolved*, That a copy of this measure be transmitted to all of
14 the 49 other state legislatures in the United States.